

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 01832 091120 Z

14

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 T-03 OMB-01 IO-13 COA-02 PM-09

NSC-10 SS-14 AID-20 RSR-01 /112 W
----- 008512

R 090940 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7565
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USINT CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 1832

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, EG

SUBJECT: CHANGE IN STATUS OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ON SINAI COAST

1. ISRAELI PRESS REPORTS MARCH 8 THAT NAHAL YAM, PARA-MILITARY OUTPOST ON NORTHERN SINAI COAST (ROUGHLY HALF WAY BETWEEN CANAL AND EL ARISH), WILL BE DISBANDED AND - CONTRARY TO WESTERN WIRE SERVICE REPORTS - REPLACED BY CIVILIAN FISHING VILLAGE. ESTABLISHED IN 1968 AS ONE OF FIRST SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND, ACCORDING TO PRESS, THE FIRST ONE IN SINAI, THIS NAHAL EVIDENTLY IS OF SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE TO ISRAELI HARDLINERS ON TERRITORIAL ISSUE. PRESS SAYS GALILI AND RIGHTIST SAMUEL TAMIR WERE UPSET MARCH 7 BY INITIAL REPORT WHICH SUGGESTED ISRAELIS PULLING OUT OF NAHAL YAM LOCATION ALTOGETHER.

2. PRESS SAYS SPOKESMAN FOR JEWISH AGENCY'S DEPARTMENT OF SETTLEMENT HAS NOW STRESSED THAT THERE IS NO INTENTION OF ABANDONING SITE. DECISION TO CONVERT IT TO CIVILIAN ENTERPRISE WAS MADE PURELY FOR ECONOMIC REASONS: NAHAL YAM FAILED TO DEVELOP PROFITABLE FISHING INDUSTRY, WHICH DEMANDS HIGH DEGREE OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND ROUND- THE- CLOCK
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 01832 091120 Z

OPERATION. SOLDIERS WORKED ONLY EIGHT- HOUR DAY, AND AVERAGE CATCH PER YEAR WAS 30 TONS, WHICH SPOKESMAN SAID WAS ONE AND ONE- HALF PERCENT OF POTENTIAL. GROUP OF YOUNG VETERANS WHO SERVED AT NAHAL YAM IN PAST AND WHO ARE INTERESTED IN FISHING WILL REPLACE SOLDIERS. FIRST GROUP HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO ARRIVE, AND ALL OF CIVILIAN SETTLERS ARE TO BE AT FORMER NAHAL BY MAY 19 73. HE ADDED THAT SETTLEMENT DEPARTMENT HAS RECENTLY SUPPLIED NAHAL WITH ADDITIONAL FISHING VESSEL AND WILL PROVIDE YET ANOTHER WITHIN A YEAR. ZURHELLEN

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*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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CAIRO
JERUSALEM
NEA
SECSTATE WASHDC
USUN

Type: TE

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